Parks, Rosa

Born: 1913 in Tuskegee, Alabama

Died: 2005 in Detroit, Michigan



Photo: Herrick, Gene*. “Rosa Parks is fingerprinted by Dep. Sherriff D.H. Lackey*

*in Montgomery, Ala., on Feb. 22, 1956, two months after refusing to give up*

*her seat on a bus for a white passenger on Dec. 1, 1955*.” Associated Press. *Mindfully.org.*

Web. 11 Nov. 2010. <http://www.mindfully.org/Reform/2005/Rosa-Parks-92-24oct05.htm>

**Biography:** As a child growing up in the south, Rosa Parks was confronted with segregation, Jim Crow laws, and racism.

She got involved in the civil rights movement in 1943 when she became a member of the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP, and then was elected as voluntary secretary to Edgar Nixon, the NAACP president. In 1955 she refused to give up her seat to a white man on a public bus in Montgomery, Alabama. This started a massive bus boycott which lasted 382 days and lead to a Supreme Court ruling which made segregation on public transportation illegal. She moved to Detroit, Michigan in 1957, working for U.S. Representative John Conyers. In 1977 she founded the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self-Development. In 1996 President Bill Clinton gave her the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and in 1999 received a Congessional Medal of Honor. She passed away at the age of 92 in 2005.

**Parks, Rosa**

**Quote: “**People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true. I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. I was not old, although some people have an image of me as being old then. I was forty-two. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in”. (Rosa Parks, source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa\_parks).

**Contributions to the Civil Rights Movement:** Although Rosa Parks was not the first to refuse to give up their seat on a Montgomery bus, her arrest brought national and worldwide attention to the issue of segregation and lead to a successful boycott of the Montgomery bus system. Through her work and the boycott she helped a young Martin Luther King Jr. gain national attention. She is often credited as the one who inspired and initiated the modern civil rights movement.

**Analysis:** Through our research we have determined that Rosa Parks created social change by becoming a symbol and inspiring thousands of people. She also initiated a boycott that successfully made segregation on public transportation unlawful. This also inspired further actions on the part of the civil rights movement, and eventually made the lives of many African-Americans easier in that they would not have to face discrimination and humiliation simply for trying to get to work, home or around town.

**Sources:**

1. The Academy of Achievement. *Rosa Parks Biography.* Oct. 14, 2010. Web. Nov. 12, 2010.
2. Biography.com. *Rosa Parks Biography.* 2010. Web. Nov. 12, 2010.
3. Scholastic.com. *Meet Rosa Parks.* 2010. Web. Nov. 12, 2010.
4. Wikipedia. *Rosa Parks.* 2010. Web. Nov.12, 2010.